

Draft statement by the delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan at the high-level international conference on supporting the city of Al-Quds/Jerusalem and its population

Cairo, February 12, 2023

Excellencies,

Dear colleagues,

I would like to start by extending my warmest greetings to the participants of this high-level conference and expressing my gratitude to H.E. Mr. Ahmed Aboulgheit, the Secretary General of the League of Arab States for organizing this event in support of the Palestinian People in Al-Quds/Jerusalem.

We meet at a time of worsening situation in Al-Quds/Jerusalem, as Palestinian People are living under harsh conditions.

The question of Palestine has historically constituted an issue of vital importance and a priority for the Members of the Non-Aligned Movement which Azerbaijan has been proudly chairing for the last more than 3 years.

In the Outcome Document of the 18th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Baku, Azerbaijan in October 2019, the Heads of State and Government reaffirmed that ongoing illegal measures, including the construction and expansion of settlements and the Wall, the confiscation of Palestinian land, demolitions of homes and the forced displacement of the Palestinian civilian population by other illegal means, are totally contradictory to the objective of peace.

All the relevant NAM documents, as well as the political declaration adopted during the most recent Mid-term Ministerial Conference of the Movement in July, 2021 stressed that a just, lasting and peaceful solution to all aspects of the question of Palestine, based on the internationally-endorsed parameters enshrined in the relevant United Nations resolutions, must remain a priority on the Movement's agenda and an ongoing responsibility of the United Nations until it is satisfactorily resolved in all its aspects.

The Movement has in its previous statements expressed conviction that Security Council resolution 2334 (2016) provides the most effective and viable path to peace, setting forth the essential requirements and parameters for the realization of a just outcome on the basis of the two-State solution based on the 1967 lines, in accordance with the long-standing terms of reference of peace endorsed by the international community.

The Movement has also, in numerous occasions, called for continued provision of the needed humanitarian and socioeconomic assistance to the Palestinian people, including the Palestinian refugees and reaffirmed the continued importance of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), along with other United Nations agencies and international organizations, in alleviating their plight.

The question of Al-Quds/Jerusalem is one of the most important, albeit complex parts of the Palestine Question, and its resolution should be at the center of international efforts to establish a just and lasting peace in the region.

Azerbaijan consistently supports the peaceful settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the basis of the principle of two states with East Jerusalem being the capital of the State of Palestine.

A few years ago, with the aim of helping the State of Palestine, Azerbaijan hosted a conference of the Islamic Financial Safety Network and a donor conference in support of the development of the city of Jerusalem. In July 2017, Baku hosted the fourth international conference on the question of Jerusalem which was co-organized by the UN and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

My country has also been repeatedly providing financial assistance to the United Nations Relief & Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the near East to showcase its commitment to Palestinian cause and as a sign of loyalty to Islamic solidarity. Most recently, amid the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Republic of Azerbaijan allocated \$300,000 of humanitarian assistance to the said Agency in response to an appeal by Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to support the fight against coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) in Palestine.

Excellencies,

I would also like to seize this opportunity to remind you about the upcoming Summit-level Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement Contact Group in response to COVID-19 on post-pandemic global recovery which will be hosted by Azerbaijani Chairmanship of the Movement on March 2, 2023 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Official invitation letters regarding the event were addressed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Heads of state and Government of all the NAM countries.

The Summit will offer invaluable opportunity to deliberate on and produce collective vision of NAM Member States on post-pandemic global recovery. We look forward to welcoming the delegations from NAM Member States at the highest level which will be instrumental to ensuring successful outcome of the Summit.

I thank you.